The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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Aspirations.

Our aims are all too high: we try
To gain the summit at a bound,
When we should reach it step by step,
And climb the ladder round by round.
He who would climb the heights sublime,
Or breathe the purer air of life,
Must not expect to rest in ease,
But brace himself for toil or strife.

We should not in our blindness seek
To grasp alone for grand and great,
Disdaining every smaller good;
For trifles make the aggregate,
And if a cloud should hover o'er
Our weary pathway like a pall,
Remember, God permits it there,
And his good purpose reigns o'er all.

Life should be full of earnest work,
Our hearts undashed by fortune's frown;
Let perseverance conquer fate,
And merits seize the victor's crown,
The battle is not to the strong,
The race is not always to the fleet;
And he who seeks to pluck the stars
Will lose the jewels at his feet.

A Prayer.

Oh, that mine eyes might closed be
To what concerns me not to see;
That deafness might possess mine ear
To what concerns me not to hear;
From ever speaking foolishly;
That no vain thought might ever rest,
Or be conceived in my breast;
That by each deed, and word, and thought,
Glory may to my God be brought!
But what are wishes? Lord, mine eye
On thee is fixed, to thee I cry!
Wash, Lord, and purify my heart,
And make it clean, Lord, keep it, too,
For that is more than I can do.

Every hour that flits so slowly
Has its task to do or bear;
Luminous the crown, and holy,
If thou set each gem with care.

For the Myrtle.

A Letter to the Myrtle.

My Dear Little Friends: By my dear little friends I mean all the boys and girls in America, or elsewhere, who read the Myrtle. I hope their number is legion. Every child who reads this paper is, by so doing, made better. You arise from this reading with your hearts touched with sympathy, and your heads filled with new and pure ideas, from which spring good resolutions. My dear children, if you will only stand firm by these resolutions and put them into practice you will be building up for yourselves characters both noble and beautiful.

Can you tell me what an architect is? It is a person who plans and builds houses. Now I want all my little friends to become good arcitects. "Why! what an absurd idea, Aunt Kate!" says a merry-eyed little girl at my side. "How could I become an architect? To build is a man's work; never a little girl's!"

"Wait one moment, my little one, and I will show you how little boys, little girls and women, as well as men, can become great architects.

"We are all placed in this world to build our own characters; we cannot help but work at this building whether we wish to or not; for every thought and every action of ours form the stones with which we are, in spite of ourselves, building this temple of character.

And now, for what are we building these temple of character? We are building them as offerings to our heavenly Father? Building them for One so great, so good and, above all, so loving as God, should they not be built in the most beautiful style possible? Then remember to build your offering of the purest and most beau-

tiful marble: let it be white, without any defect. Be careful lest you become the architect of an ugly, crooked, unsafe building. To avoid this, never use these stones—cross words, frowns, angry or sulky looks, impure thoughts, or, blackest of all, evil deeds. Never allow yourselves even to think anything, of which you would be ashamed that others should know. Here then, is the secret by which you can build a beautiful character: never think evil. Cultivate purity of heart. What are your hearts? Are they not God's temple? O then! keep them pure and holy. Then the thanks of your Father will be whispered to you by your guardian angel. Conscience, and God's reward, which comes to all who try to do right, will thrill every fibre of your being; and your countenance, though your features be homely, will shine with the "beauty of holiness."

Now my little friends, you each see that you *must* be an architect. What kind of a temple are you building? Are you making it of beautiful white marble; or are you making it to be an ugly mass of uneven, blackened stones which displeases all who behold it? My little architects, I bid you a loving good-bye.

Affectionately, *Aunt Katie.*

Where's John?

"Where's John?" thought the old cow, as she put her head out of the window at the back of her stall in the barn. "The sun is an hour high, and I am so hungry that I am chewing the straw of my bed. I wish John would come! I want my breakfast. Mooo-oo-oo!"

"Sure enough, where's John?" thought the old white hen. "It is time for John to come with the meal for me and my chicks. Just hear them cry! They want their breakfast. Cluck, cluck, cluck!"

"Cock-a-doodle-do! That will rouse him, I guess," thought the old fighting cock. "Cock-a-doodle-do! Come along, John! you are wanted. The cow wants her breakfast; the hen and her little chicks want theirs; so do the ducks, the turkeys and the doves. And I want mine. Cock-a-doodle-do!"

"Gobble-gobble-gobble? I do wish John would come!" thought the old turkey. "Iv'e been off my roost more than two hours; and the ground is so dry that worms are scarce. Why doesn't he come? Gobble-gobble-gobble!"

"Coo-oo-oo! I, too, am hungry," thought the dove. "Some crumbs and seed and corn, if you please, John! Here we are all of us waiting. Coo-oo-oo!"

"Quack, quack! Will that boy never come with our breakfast?" thought the two old ducks, who were waiting with the rest. "We want to go and swim in the pond; but we must have our breakfast first. Quack, quack!"

And so they all waited and waited. But it was almost seven o'clock before John came and unlocked the barn-door. What had been the matter? I will tell you; but let me whisper it in your ear, for John feels a little mortified about it. You must know, then, that John, instead of jumping out of bed at once when he woke, turned over and went to sleep again; and when he woke the second time the sun was high, and he saw that he had been very remiss. He will not do so again. The best way is to jump out of bed at once.—*The Nursery.*

In Memory of Julia Gertrude Eyre.

[Died Jan. 8, 1875, aged 11 years, 6 months.]

WALKING in the fields we see
Many a lovely flower,
Some will linger all the day,
Others but an hour;
All are beautiful and bright,
All are precious in His sight.
Gertie, lovely little child
Early doomed to fade,
Only for a day you smiled,
Now in death low laid;
Gone forever from our sight,
Blooming in the fields of light!
Darling, nought is left of thee
But a pleasant memory.

A. S. F.

The Bee's Cell.

Many years ago a distinguished naturalist, named Miraldi, noticing that the walls of honeycomb cells had always the same angles, measured them and found that they exactly equaled two right angles, or one hundred and eighty degrees. Sometime after, a great mathematician was requested to make a calculation that should secure, for a vessel of a similar form, "the greatest amount of space with the least amount of material." The result was exactly such a figure as the bee has made through all ages. How wonderfully this disylays the exactness with which all the works of God are made. "In wisdom hast Thou made them all." And, working under his direction, even the humblest of his creatures is sure not to err.

Children at Church.

[The following words from the *Pittsburg Morning Guide* we most heartily approve; and we commend them to the careful attention of all the readers of the MYRTLE. We wish the parents of all Sunday School children would also carefully read them.—ED.]

We urge all the boys and girls of the Sunday Schools everywhere, in the city and in the country, to attend the preaching of the Word. The Sunday School is not enough. The Gospel is to be preached, and must be heard. The children may hear and understand it. The church has privileges which the Sunday School has not. Among these is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. There is room at the Lord's table for the children. Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Dear young people, do not turn your backs upon Jesus. Meet him in the public congregation. Listen to his ministers when they preach. Find your places at the communion-table, Do not merely move about the doors of the church, in the gallery, or the lecture-room, but go into the pew with father and mother, get into the church with your hearts, fully and forever inside the kingdom.

How beautiful it is to see a congregation where there are children here and there, plenty of them, all through the house, from the steps of the pulpit clear back to the doors! The singing would be sweeter, the preaching would be better, and best of all, everybody would be happier, and more like Jesus.

Queer Tom.

Tom Flossofer was the queerest boy I ever saw. I don't think he ever cried; I never saw him. If Fleda found her tulips all rooted up by her pet puppy, and cried, as little girls will, Tom was sure to come round the corner, whistling, and say:

"What makes you cry? Can you cry tulips? Do you think every sob makes a root or a blossom? Here, let's try to right them."

So he would pick up the poor flowers, put their roots into the ground again, whistling all the time, make the bed look smooth and fresh, and take Fleda off to hunt hen's nests in the barn. Neither did he do any differently in his own troubles. One day his great kite snapped the string and flew away far out of sight. Tom stood still for one moment, and then turned round to come home, whistling a merry tune.

"Why, Tom," said I, "aren't you sorry to loose that kite?"

Yes, but what's the use? I can't take more than a minute to feel bad. 'Sorry' won't bring the kite back, and I want to make another."

Just so when he broke his leg.

"Poor Tom," cried Fleda, "you can't play any mo-o-o-o-re."

"I'm not poor, either. You cry for me; I don't have to do it for myself, and I have a splendid time to whittle. Besides, when I get well, I shall beat every body in school on the multiplication table; for I say it over and over till it makes me sleepy, every time my leg aches."

Tom Flossofer was queer, certainly, but I wish a great many more people were queer that way.

Stick it on the Mindr

A boy, in a fit of passion, spoke God's name in vain. As soon as the words were out of his mouth, he was ashamed and sorry; and when he went home he asked his mother to write down all the Bible said about profane swearing. He said he wanted to study it, and stick it on his mind, and carry it about with him everywhere.

So she found and copied the following texts:

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain."—Exod. xx. 7.

"Because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up."—Jer. xxiii. 10.

"I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let our communication be yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."—Matt. v. 34 37.

"Above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by the earth; neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; lest you fall into condemnation."—James v. 12.

He learned these Scriptures; and I have written them down for every boy who reads these lines to learn them also.—*Religious Herald.*

A LITTLE girl seeing a dog scratching to be let in at an opposite door, promptly knocked at the window and called out, "'Ing e bell, doggy; 'ing e bell."

For the Myrtle.

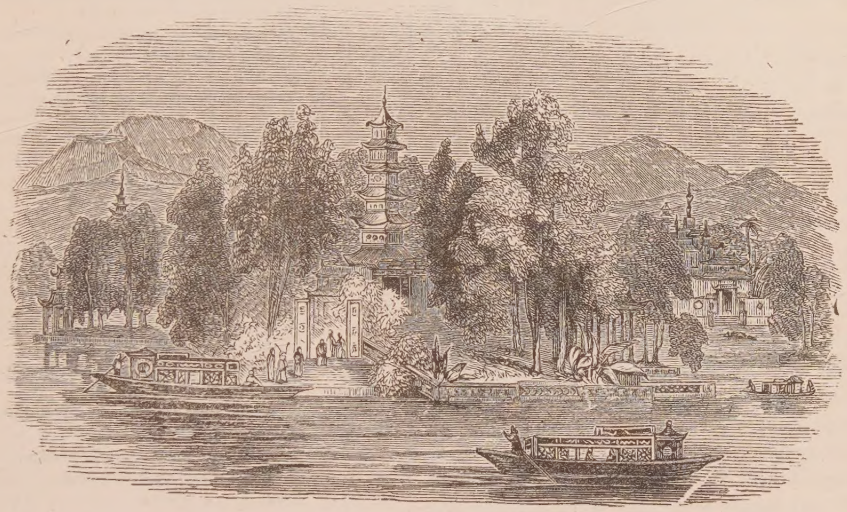
Mother's Helpers.

These little children, William and Katie Greenacre, live at Yarmouth, England, Their father is dead, and their mother very poor.

They live in a miserably poor cottage, and have no means of making fire for cooking or warmth, except as the children bring in sticks for fuel which they find by the road-side.

They are very good children, and try to help their mother in every possible way.

Some times they search all day, and get very few sticks; and then they feel very sadly to go home to their mother empty-handed. But other days they are more fortunate, and they get a large bundle, such as we see William carrying now, on his head. Then they walk cheerfully homeward, knowing how welcome their coming will be. *E. M. B.*



For the Myrtle.

The Blind Girl.

"COME Jessie, and sit by me, and I will show you the pictures in this book," said Ella Quigly to Jessie Gutsleaf, a little blind girl, who was visiting at her mother's house.

"Why Ella, how thoughtless you are," said Mrs. Quigly. It is cruel to talk of showing pictures to a blind girl.

I did not mean to be cruel mother. I forgot that Jessie couldn't see."

"But you should not be so thoughtless my child. It is nearly as bad as being willfully wicked."

"Please do not reprove her Mrs. Quigly," said Jessie coming forward from the corner where she had been sitting for a long time, silent. I am sure that Ella intended to give me pleasure, and indeed she can give me great pleasure in showing me the book, if she is willing to take the slow way which is necessary to make a blind girl understand."

"What do you mean?" says Ella, eagerly.

"I mean, that if you are willing to let me see with your eyes, we may get much pleasure from the pictures though I cannot see them myself."

"How, with my eyes? I do not quite understand you yet."

"Why, by your looking at the pictures, and telling me what you see."

"Oh yes," said Ella, "I shall be very happy to do that. Come, let us sit here, in the bay window, and then I shall have plenty of light and can see the pictures well."

"I shall be pleased to do that," says Jessie," for the sunlight is very pleasant to me. I thank God every day, for having made the sun, though I shall never see it with mortal eyes."

"That is wonderful, Jessie. I do not understand how it can make one bit of difference to you whether the sun shines or not. You do not see one ray of light, do you?"

"No Ella. So far as sight is concerned, midnight and midday are the same to me, but I love the sunlight because it feels so pleasant to me. When I sit where the sun shines on me, I seem to drink in joy through every pore of my skin, and in that sense, I *feel* God where you *see* Him."

"Oh, that is beautiful," said Ella. Come and have this easy chair, and we will have a nice time together.

When the children were settled in the sunny corner, Ella opened the book, and began to tell Jessie about the pictures, She was very careful to tell her all about them, not simply to say: "This is a horse, this is a dog." But carefully

she noted everything about the picture and reproduced it in words.

This was a good exercise for her, and she enjoyed it thoroughly.

"This Jessie," she said, coming to the picture which you have before you, "this is a Chinese picture. It has a river with very odd looking boats on it, a queer looking tower standing among some beautiful trees, with mountains in the back-ground."

"Oh," said Jessie, pass on to the next picture, wont you please? It always makes me shudder to hear about China."

"Why Jessie?"

"Because it was there that my eyes were put out."

"Put out Jessie? What do you mean?"

"Just what I say" Jessie replied. "My eyes were burned out with hot irons."

"Oh Jessie, how horrible. How did it come to be done? They must have been terribly wicked people to have done so wicked a deed."

"No Ella, they were not very wicked people. They thought they were doing right when they destroyed my eyes, and the eyes of hundreds of other little children."

"How could they think so, Jessie?"

"They did this as an offering to their idols, and felt very happy while they were doing it, and after it was done."

"Oh, Jessie how can people be so much mistaken! How thankful I am that you are out of that dreadful country."

"I try to be thankful every day I live that God brought me to America, where I can learn of Him without such fearful tortures."

"How did you get away from China!"

"I was brought away, with five other little girls, blind like myself, by a kind missionary who was coming home to this country."

"Oh tell me all about it."

"It is too long a story for to-day. Perhaps another day I will tell it you." *E. M. B.*

A SOUND philosopher once said: "He that thinks any innocent pastime foolish has either to grow wiser, or is past the ability to do so;" and I have always counted it an impudent fiction that playfulness is inconsistent with greatness. Many men and women have died of dignity.

THE door sill of home is the threshold of Heaven.

Ned's Story.

GOOD-NIGHT, dear; but just wait a minute;
Come here close beside me, Ned;
I've a little story to tell you;
But what is the matter—your head
Hanging down, your hands in your pockets?
Why, one scarcely would know you so.
There, that's better. Now, are you ready?
You always liked stories, you know.

There was once on a time a great giant,
Whose home was close by a wood,
In which lived a nice honest couple
As snugly as ever they could.
They had built themselves a neet cottage,
So cozy and dainty and small
That, with the three wee ones within it,
There was just enough room for all.

Day by day toiled the father and mother,
As surely there was need,
Grubbing and gleaning and picking,
The three little mouths to feed;
Training meanwhile their darlings
In the way in which they should go,
Yet gayly singing while toiling,
And waiting for them to grow.

"Fee-faw-fum!" said one day the giant,
As he loitered near the spot,
"I've a great mind to steal those babies;
I could do it as well as not.
I shan't eat them, of course, I'm no ogre;
But then it will be such fun—
Such a scare to the father and mother!"
And so the foul deed was done.

* * * * * * *

Just think of it Ned; only fancy
How your father and mother would feel
If away from their arms some robber
Their little boy should steal,
And treat him unkindly or kill him!
Oh! what would they say or do?
How sad you look, Ned! One surely
Would deem the giant was you.
What! again your hands in your pockets?
Let me see, dear; hold up your head,
As sure as I live, a bird's nest,
And three little birdies—dead!
Good-night, Ned; I see you are sorry.
When you pray, put in these words:
"Our Father in heaven, forgive me
For killing your dear little birds!"

E. A B., in Independent.

A DRUNKEN father once sold the Testament of a sick child to obtain a drink of whiskey. When dying, she said, "Father, I am going to see Jesus; what shall I tell him that you did with my Testament?" From that hour it is said, the father became a sober man.

WE can not conquer fate and necessity, yet we can yield to them in such a manner as to be greater than if we could.

Universalist Sabbath School Union.

A Conference Meeting of the Union was held in the Universalist church, South Boston, on Wednesday afternoon and evening, January 29th.

The afternoon meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. I. M. Atwood. An essay was read by Rev. H. I Cushman, subject, "Attachment to Christ." The essay gave great satisfaction and was universally commended by all present.

The evening services in the church were opened with prayer by Rev. L. L. Briggs. The president gave an account of the work proposed to be done by the Union during the current year. Bro. B. B. Whittemore read an essay; subject, "The Church and the Sunday School; how shall their interests be united?" The essay was well written and contained valuable suggestions, which should be heeded by all.

Temperance Concert.

Many of our Sabbath Schools would, doubtless, like occasionally to have a concert on the subject of temperance. A carefully-prepared order of exercises would be a great help in many cases. For the benefit of such schools, we would state that Mr. Benjamin R. Jewell, general agent of the Massachusets Total Abstinence Society, has arranged and published such an order of exercises. It contains over twenty different parts; as, singing, responsive Scripture reading, prayer, monthy report of superintendent, secretary, and treasurer, numerous Scripture and other recitations, remarks by the pastor and others, etc.

This Order of Exercises can be had of the Universalist Publishing House.

Easter Allegory.

In the *Helper* for March will be found "An Easter Allegory," by Rev. L. J. Fletcher, which will be a a prize to all schools who are to celebrate Easter. The name of the author is sufficient to commend it but we are impelled to add our commendation of its excellence.

THE UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE have now ready an Allegory entitled "The Christian Graces"—prepared expressly for Sunday School exhibitions. It has been successfully given at the Universalist church, Chelsea, for whose Sunday School it was originally written. Price 25 cts. or 5 for $1.

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

— On Sunday, Jan. 13th, the annual meeting of the Worcester Sunday School was held in the church. Reports of the various officers were read. That of the librarian, Mr. O. T. Crawford, showed a total of 1136 volumes in the library. The report of the Treasurer, Mr. Otis Warren, was as follows:—Balance at the beginning of last year, $71 60 contributions of the Sunday School, $115.69; expenditures, $141.10; cash in hand $45.19. It appeared from the report of the Secretary, Mr. Seagrave, that the total number of scholars is 354; largest number in attendance any one Sunday, 249; average attendance, 187. The school lost four of its members—two teachers and two scholars—by death, during the year 1874

— The Sunday School in Orleans gave an exhibition and festival, Tuesday January 5th. The exercises consisted of recitations and music, and were of a high order. Ensign Rogers, the efficient Superintendent, was presented with two silver vases. Miss Freeman made the presentation address, which was happily responded to. Mrs. Joseph Cummings, at her own cost, furnished a collation; and to her a large portion of the success of the occasion is due. The net proceeds were $75.

— The society in Marshfield had an antiquarian supper and fair. The occasion was made especially pleasant to the younger members of the Sunday School as it took the place of a Christmas festival. They were the happy recipients of presents for their faithfulness in the Sunday School. The Superintendent was presented with a beautiful Bible and the pastor and wife had nice and useful presents.

— Mr. Thomas A. Scott formerly a teacher in the Roxbury Sunday School, dying, makes several bequests, among which is the sum of $200 for the school.

— A Sunday School has been formed at Dorchester under the superintendency of Mr. Charles A. Burditt, who brings to that service a rich experience.

— The Universalists of Danbury have added to the rear of their Church a beautiful room for Sunday School and Conference meetings.

MARYLAND.

— We are pleased to hear Baltimore report, "Our Sunday School is continually increasing in numbers, and the scholars are prompt in attendance and very attentive to their duties, in the way of lessons and exercises.

OHIO.

— Blanchester writes: "Our Sunday School never was in a more prosperous condition."

— Mrs. Soule reports the Sunday School at Dayton, in these words: "This is one of our best schools in Ohio, and we learned that the girls and boys are as self-sacrificing as are the women and men, and have nobly done their part toward freeing their beautiful Sunday Home from debt. They have an organization known as "The Busy Bees," the "little women" of which meet every Saturday afternoon to earn money toward the church debt. They are now cutting and sewing carpet-rags They collect the rags themselves, cut and sew and receive twelve cents a pound for their balls. We have great hopes of our denomination with such girls in its Sunday Schools, for we know they will grow up into noble, self-reliant women.

INDIANA.

— The *Guiding Star* says of the school at LaFayette: "This is one of the excellent schools of Indiana, and under the superintendency of Bro. George Rogers is doing a noble work for our cause."

—Of Dublin it says: "The school demonstrates the fact that a school can be well sustained without regular Sunday preaching. Rev. T. S. Guthrie of Muncie, preaches here once a month only, on week evenings—but the parish is self-reliant enough to sustain this large school.

KANSAS.

— The Sunday School at Lawrence, under the superintendence of Mrs. Barnes, assisted by a devoted band of teachers and officers, is doing well.

Lesson on Hearing.

"Take heed therefore how ye hear."—Luke vii. 18

Now that we have had, since the New Year came, six lessons on "Doing," we will try looking for a little at the other side of our life, and to-day we will talk of Being—in the sense of accepting the help of others.

It may, in your first thought, seem that you have no responsibility about what is being done for you. You may say to yourself, that belongs entirely with others and not at all with me.

So thought little Richard Grimes, and I will introduce you to him and let you see what came of his thinking.

"Can you not tell us a story to-night father?" said Richard one evening, as the family drew around the winter fire.

"A story, my boy?" what shall it be," said the father. "It seems to me that you are very greedy for stories. I scarcely get through a day without telling you one or more."

"I know it father. But I cannot help it. I think boys were made to hear stories, as birds are to fly."

"That's a curious idea Richard. I thought boys were made for use. Wasn't that the lesson your teacher in the Sunday School gave you last Sunday?"

"Yes sir. She said boys were made for use, Body, mind and soul, head, hands, and feet, every part of us, she said God had created for uses."

"Well then, how do you account for my little boy, who received that lesson only last Sunday, coming to his father to-day with the statement that boys were made to hear stories."

"Why, that's a use, isn't it, father?"

"How do you make that out?"

"The stories are useful, are they not?"

"Some of them are. and some are not. But if we admit that the stories are useful, what has the boy to do with that? He does not tell the stories."

"No, father. But he hears them. What would a story be without a boy to hear it?"

"I think it would be a story still, for we would tell it to the girls then."

"You know I didn't mean boys alone. But what would your stories be if there were no children to hear them?"

"Very well Richard. I admit that there is some force in what you say. But you must remember thet the usefulness of the boy or girl depends upon *how* they hear, rather than upon the mere fact of their hearing."

"Why all boys hear with their ears, father. I don't understand what you mean, when you say that our usefulness depends on how we hear."

"Well, let me explain to you. Last week when I was passing, with Mr. Doty through his house, on our way to his orchard we went through the room where his three boys were sitting. Little Ben was playing with his kitten, Henry was mending his kite, and Hal was reading.

Mr. Doty sain," "boys I wish you to go at once to the garden and weed those three beds of beets Each of you take one of the beds, and pull the weeds up carefully. You must not delay, for now is the time to do it while the dew is on the plants."

'I noticed that little Ben looked up with attention, while his father was speaking.

Henry glanced at his father with that half attentive eye which told me that his thoughts were divided between the message he was receiving, and the play he was planning.

Hal did not lift his eyes from the book he was reading, but answered, "Yes sir."

We passed on to the orchard and returned after an hour's absence. Our way lay through the garden, and we paused to see how well the boys had done their work.

Hal had not looked up from his book since we left him. In truth he had been so engaged with it, that he had not heard one word that his father had said. He knew that he was spoken to, and replied, 'Yes sir,' but of what was said, he knew nothing.

Henry had taken his thoughts away from the kite enough to know that his father said something about the garden beds. Just what the message was, he did not get distinctly at the time, and after he had worked on the kite a half hour longer, before going to the garden, he only had an indistinct memory that he was to do something with a garden-bed. What it was, he could not tell. So he took the hoe and disturbed some young cabbage plants, very nearly destroying them, for they were just set, and needed nothing but a quiet time to root.

Now by this story you see the three ways of hearing. One boy had heard with his ears, but not with his understanding. Another had half heard, and therefore wretchedly attended to the command given him, while the third boy gave attention when he knew that he was spoken to, and, as a result of this attention, he obeyed the order perfectly.

Being attentive is found then to be one of the elements of success in life. It is not activity like working with the hands, and yet no active *doing* is more important than this passive *being*.

Letter Puzzle. C.

Letters six have I;
My one two three I sought to know,
So to the teacher I did go,
My five consenting
My one, four, two and six, they say,
I now-a-days do for liberal pay,
Without relenting,
To find me try.

Answer to Letter Puzzle. B.

Feb 20, Bethany.

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